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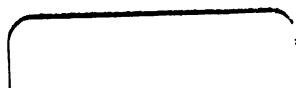
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THE
HEARNS
CASE





THE
HEART'S EASE;
OR,
A REMEDY
AGAINST ALL TROUBLE.



THE
HEART'S EASE;

OR,

A REMEDY
AGAINST ALL TROUBLE.

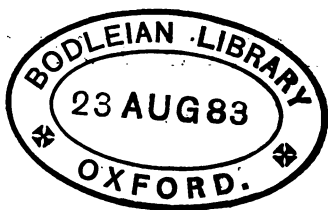
BY

SYMON PATRICK, D.D.,
Sometime Lord Bishop of Ely.

"In the multitude of my thoughts within me
Thy comforts delight my soul."

LONDON:
SUTTABY AND CO.,
AMEN CORNER, ST. PAUL'S.
MDCCCLXXXIII.

111 n. 352



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DEDICATORY LETTER.

(ABRIDGED.)

TO THE HONOURABLE SIR WALTER ST.
JOHN, BARONET; AND THE LADY ST.
JOHN, HIS WIFE.

THERE is no greater trouble to some ingenuous souls than to be requited with injuries for the kindnesses they have done to others: but they may soon consider that this beset our Master, Jesus Christ himself. And though it be in their power to do good to others, yet it belongs not to them to make them good. And if there be any way to beget love in them, it is by love: and there is no small contentment in loving those who have no love for us. For this is the very height of love, and love itself is a thing so sweet; that it is its own reward.

x
DEDICATORY LETTER.

But some, perhaps, have this addition of trouble, that their own friends do not love them; and those whom God and nature do command to be kind are ill-affected towards them. The same remedy will cure this disease. And let them turn their love into pity, that any should be so unhappy as to be strangers to the rarest pleasures in the world, which arise from loving of others. And you may see from hence also the necessity of one rule which I have commended, which is, Not to hope confidently for any thing here below. And particularly remember this, that you may be disappointed if you look for any more satisfaction from your children than the pleasure of doing good to them, and seeing them do good to themselves. For the old saying hath had but few hitherto to cross it, That love, like your inheritances, doth descend, but useth not to ascend.

There is a little number of good souls perhaps who are troubled for what other suffer, and are afflicted with the misery their neighbours. There are so few of

complain of this grief, and it is a malady that men are so seldom sick of, that I should scarce have thought it needful to have prescribed any physic for such a rare disease. But if any be oppressed with this sort of trouble, let them consider what is said in the ensuing Treatise, that they do others no good, but themselves harm, by being troubled. And therefore let them be sensible of their miseries so far only as to pray for them, and relieve them, if they can, and to make their heart sensible of God's mercies to themselves, and by that joy they may cure the other trouble.

But men are troubled perhaps that religion is like to suffer. I am very glad of it, if they be; for then I suppose such persons are so much in love with religion, that they will not let their trouble hinder any part of their duty. And if they do their duty, they may leave it to God to have a care of the interest of religion, for he loves it far better than we can do.

But some are troubled that they are no more troubled. A sad thing that we should

be discontented at that for which we should be thankful! For by this trouble they mean nothing else but a confusedness of spirit, which never did any body any good. The rubbing of the eyes doth not fetch out the mote, but makes them more red and angry; no more doth this distraction and fretting of the mind discharge it of any ill-humours, but rather makes them more abound to vex us.

But some are yet troubled because they fell from the height of their resolution, and are more troubled now than once they were at what befalls them. Whereas they once observed these rules well, and kept themselves in peace, they fall now into some discontent again; whereas they did pray with some fervour, they now abate of the height of their zeal. Truly we must not expect, while we are here below in this cave or dungeon, to be quite free from all such damps. And it may be some degree of pride not to be able to endure some dullness and coldness of spirit. Be not troubled if at all

times you cannot do as well as you would, but labour to do as well as you can. And especially take heed that the not doing of what you did do not breed in you a fearfulness that you should never do as you were wont again. This dispirits the soul, and so disheartens it, that it runs itself into that very thing which it is taking a course to avoid.

Remember well that rule which is the first that you meet withal in the following book : Know your duty thoroughly, and then do it. There was a great master among the Jews, who bid his scholars consider and tell him, what was the best way wherein a man should always keep ? One came and said that there was nothing better than a good eye, which is, in their language, a liberal and contented disposition. Another said a good companion is the best thing in the world. A third said a good neighbour was the best thing he could desire. And a fourth preferred a man that could foresee things to come ; i.e. a wise person. But at last came in one Eleazer,

*given me abundant testimony that I can do
nothing to displease you, and thereby laid a
perpetual engagement upon me to be*

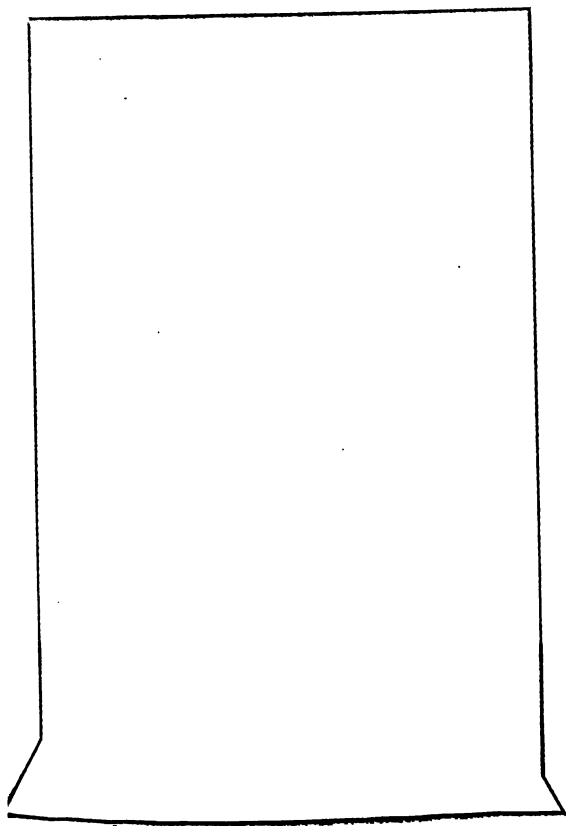
*The most affectionate
of those that love and serve you,
SYMON PATRICK.*

Oct. 4th, 1659.



AN INTRODUCTION,

**Showing that all men's desires are seeking
for Outlet.**



INTRODUCTION.



"Let not your hearts be troubled."

JOHN xiv. 1.

IT is not either fineness of wit, or abundance of wealth, or any such like inward or outward ornament, that makes the difference between men, and renders the one better than the other ; but the firmness of good principles, the settledness of the spirit, and the quiet of the mind. To the obtaining of which all the old philosophers, many hundreds of years before our Saviour, did wisely summon all their forces ; all whose lessons when they

are summed up amount only to this, to teach a man how to be contented. Socrates was upon this score accounted the best amongst them, because though he understood but a little of the frame of Nature, yet he well understood himself, and perceived that he was not the wisest man, that could read rare things in the stars, and could follow the paths of the sun, and trace all the heavenly bodies in the course which they run, but he that could tell how not to be troubled either for the want of that knowledge, or for any other thing.

Christianity hath not a new design in hand, but more rare and excellent instruments to effect the old. What heathens could speak of, it enables us to do. And still it is as true as ever it was, that nothing betters a man's condition but that which rids him of all

his griefs, and eases him of his troubles. So a great divine among the ancients observes, that Christians are not distinguished from others by outward fashions and modes, by their external forms and moulds into which they are cast, or by professing a body of notions differing from others in the world ; but by the renewing of their minds, by the peaceableness of their thoughts, by charity and heavenly love, &c. And if we behold in their minds, as in other men's, great shakings or earthquakes, unsettled thoughts and reasonings, unbelief, confusedness, trouble, trembling, fearfulness—all these words he uses—they are fast bound to worldly things, they have not attained the end of their Christianity, and are but a little bettered by their new condition.

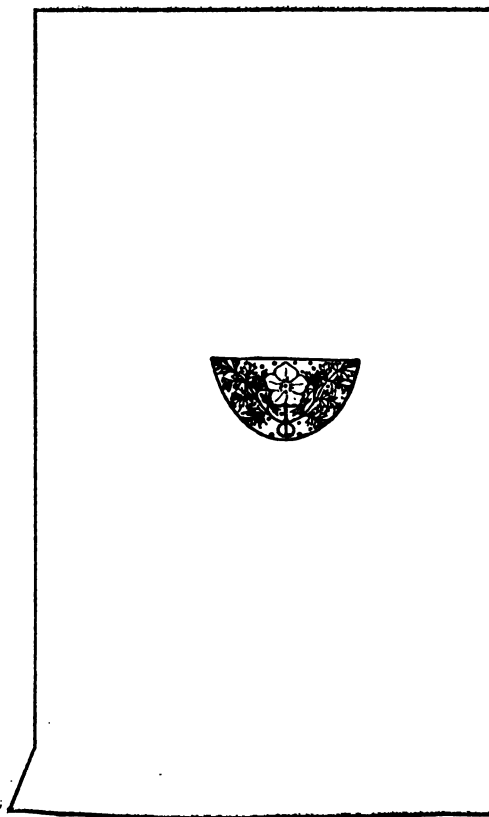
That Christ came to discharge the

mind of those troublesome guests, the text (and many other verses of the ensuing chapters) plainly tell us ; the sense of which is this, Do but believe that I am from God, and that what I say is his mind, and you need not be troubled. The faith of Christ is an antidote against all evil : peace is the proper result of the Christian temper. It is the great kindness which our religion doth us, that it brings us to a settledness of mind, and a consistency within ourselves.

Our Saviour, when he spake these words, was just going to leave his little flock, and you must needs think that his patients, who were yet under his cure, could not but take the news of his departure very heavily ; therefore, as a wise and tender physician, he prescribes them the best directions

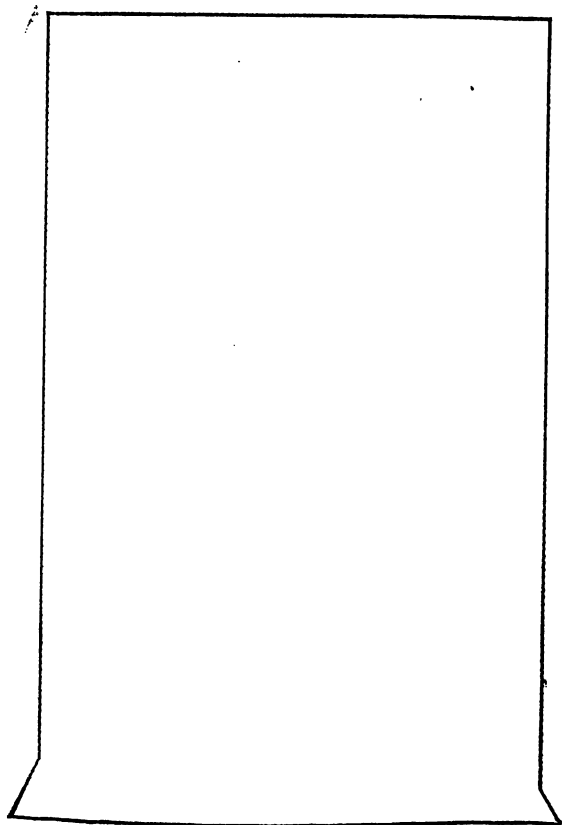
that he could, and leaves them in their hands, assuring them that every precept of his was a sovereign medicine, every promise of his a cordial to relieve their fainting spirits ; and particularly telling them that he would send the Comforter, and that they should be under the regimen and care of the Holy Ghost. These heavenly recipes they have transcribed and transmitted unto all succeeding ages, so that over the Gospel we may write what the Egyptians did over their library, " This is the hospital for sick souls." After all our search something will trouble us, unless we have recourse hither ; or if nothing do, our case is so much the worse ; and that which now would be only trouble, will hereafter be tribulation and anguish.

That which I intend for the subject



CHAPTER I.

**Two Reasons against Trouble, drawn
from Christ's promises, and God's
providence.**



THE
HEART'S EASE ·
OR,
A REMEDY
AGAINST ALL TROUBLE.

CHAPTER I.

1. **F**OR the former, let us consider,
that trouble is a great disparagement to the promises of the Gospel, which give us ease in every case, unless we refuse to become God's patients, and will not use his remedies. In the case of sin's prevalency, it saith, "Sin shall not have dominion over you." "The law of the Spirit of life

THE HEART'S EASE.

in Christ Jesus hath made me free.”
“If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father ;” which supports our spirits under the thoughts both of what we have admitted, and what we fear we shall admit. To the poor man and the persecuted, it saith, “Let your conversation be without covetousness. . . . So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear.” And, “Seek you first the kingdom of God.” “Blessed are you when you are persecuted.” And, that I may not enumerate all particulars, it saith to every Christian, whatsoever condition he be in, “Be careful for nothing ; but in everything by prayer. . . . And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding.”

When we sit down therefore, desponding either under the power or

the guilt of our sins, and think that they can never be forgiven, or never overcome ; when we murmur, or are dejected, because we are mean, despised, and afflicted ; when we are impatient for the loss of our friends, or our goods, we do only betray our own ignorance, or unbelief, or idleness : we either know not what the Gospel speaks, or we do not believe it, or we resolve not to be the better for it, if it will put us to any labour ; either we or the Gospel must bear the blame of our trouble and disquiet ; either that cannot relieve us, or we do ill to behave ourselves as though it could not. I know every good Christian will accuse himself : not that ; but let him consider that he cannot do it, nor his Saviour honour, but by ceasing his discontents ; for others will think that

he is no better physician than the rest, who hath no better success in his cures.

2. It is a great disparagement to the Providence of God, which rules the world. If there were no Providence, I confess we were destitute of the greatest reason that man hath against fears, and cares, and sorrows ; and he that is troubled would be less unreasonable, because all the care would lie upon himself, and his own shoulders must alone bear the burden of every accident. But seeing we acknowledge an eternal wisdom, an infinite, unprejudiced understanding, that governs and superintends in all affairs, it is the greatest folly to be disquieted, and to deport ourselves as if we and chance ruled all. Some have satisfied them-

selves with this single thought, that it is in vain to be troubled, since things must not be as we will, but as that Almighty Being pleases : a cold comfort, one would think, to be content upon necessity ; and yet this some heathens have mainly insisted upon as their support. Thanks be to God that we have something better for to quiet us, and that is this, that the world is governed not merely by God's will, but by his wisdom. He disposeth all things according to his pleasure, but it pleaseth him to do all things for the best. He rules the world not as an absolute Lord, so that we should be sensible only of his power, but as a loving Father, so that we should be confident of his goodness. And, therefore, his children should not be displeased, as if they were none of his family, nor

within the verge of his care, and were wholly forgotten by him ; but they should comfort themselves that they are in such safe hands, who will do nothing but with the greatest reason, and for the most excellent ends. A pithy saying of one of the better sorts of heathens was, "All God's actions are full of Providence ;" and, therefore, there is no reason that we should be displeased, as if God did not do well, or we could do better. You would think it strange if the flocks and herds should make a mutiny because their shepherd chooses their pasture for them, and will not let them wander into wild deserts and barren places, nor stray one from another, they know not whither, nor run in rank meadows and fat grounds that may breed a rot *among them* ; and yet such a thing is

our trouble and vexation, because we cannot do as we list, or are not as we would choose. It is a fond desire to have the rod and the staff out of the hand of the Shepherd of Israel, and then we might soon walk into dangerous paths ; and when we had brought ourselves into the valley of the shadow of death, find none at all to afford us any comfort.

It is distrust of God to be troubled about what is to come, impatience against God to be troubled for what is present, and anger at him to be troubled for what is past. This temper of spirit finds fault with his wisdom, and blames his goodness, and depresses his power, and reprehends his faithfulness in the disposal of things ; and therefore it is a sin, and speedily to be amended.

To be troubled speaks as if God had provided better for the beasts than for mankind ; for they live in peace within themselves, and we hear not of their murmurs and complaints. And by the same reason that thou art troubled, all the men in the world may be vexed also ; and so none think or speak well of God, but behave themselves as if he cared not for his rational creatures. For thou mayest consider that God hath endowed thee with an understanding of such a size, with abilities and capacities of such a proportion, and measured for thee such a fortune and condition as now thou hast : if thou art not contented, but frettest within thyself that thou art not better, then so may another man, for he wants something also ; yea, so may all men, for they are all imperfect. And upon

the same grounds that thou art troubled for the want of one particular thing, thou mayest at the next step be troubled that thou art not a king, or that thou art not an angel ; and an angel may also be troubled that he is not a principality, or one of the seven spirits that stand at the throne of God ; and one of those may take it ill that he was made not to understand more ; and so the best things would be most miserable, because they understand best their own wants. Many arguments to this purpose might be heaped up from the consideration of God's providence, but I shall only mention one more.

God's providence hath so ordered the several degrees of things in the world, that none of them should be troubled, but should mutually help and be assistant unto each other in their

several wants ; and so there is not the greatest man living but stands in need of the meanest, as much as the meanest doth of him ; just as none of us can live without the beasts, no more than many of them can live without us.

What things we want God hath otherwise supplied us with : either in some other kind, or else in the same by some other help. Which is an observation that we are so well acquainted withal, that we are not discontented because we need clothes, and were born naked into the world ; nor do we account the beasts have a privilege above us, because they come well clad into being, and provided with apparel for all their lives, or are armed with horns and hoofs ; for God hath given unto us reason, which is a better thing, and hath made them both to

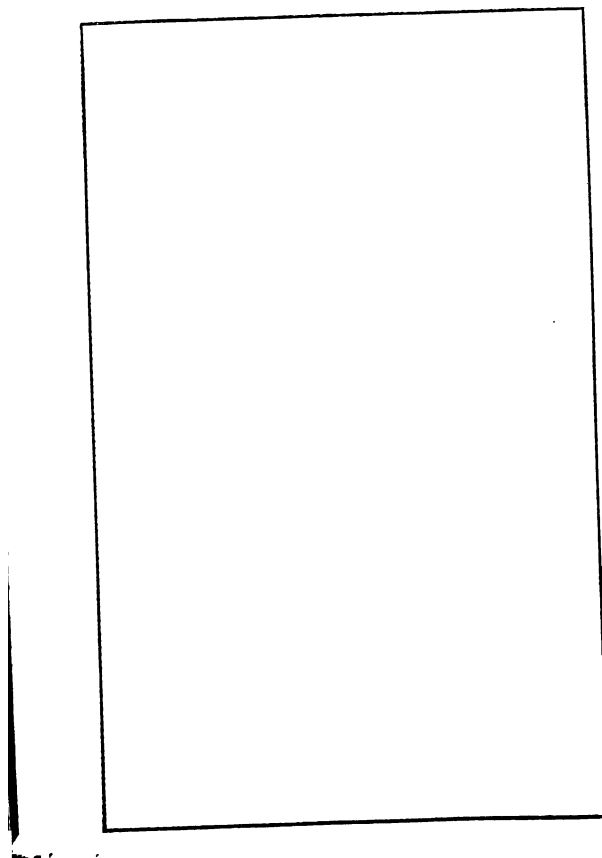
clothe and to arm us. Now so it is in other cases: as God hath made the brutes to help us in lesser things, so hath he made other men to relieve our greater necessities, to comfort us in our sadnesses, to supply us in our wants, to advise us in our straits, and to be eyes and hands unto us, if we have no wisdom nor strength of our own; yea, his own Son hath he given to make a universal provision for us. Now when we ask and resolve ourselves, Which is better, to come into the world with clothes on our backs, or to have reason? we should ascend up a little higher in our thoughts, and put to ourselves a parallel case: Which is best, to have all in thy own hands and sole disposal, or to have a Supreme Providence, an Infinite Wisdom, to govern all thy affairs? When

we find the difference between these two, let us not live as if God ruled not at all, or if it were better that we did rule than he.



CHAPTER II.

**Three other Reasons, which show that we
may be good, whatsover comes ; and we
may turn it into good ; and if we do not,
it will be a double evil.**



CHAPTER II.

WE should not be troubled, because we may be good in every condition. What should he fear, who may always be what he should be? What need he be vexed, who need not be miserable unless he will? What cause hath he to be displeased, who may always please God and himself too? The philosophers used to comfort themselves with this: "The tyrant may kill me, but he cannot hurt me; he may make me suffer torments, but he cannot make me do a dishonest action. I may be poor, but still I may be just, and I may be contented. I may be ill spoken of, but still I can

do well. I may be sick, but still I may be patient. I may be in prison, but there I may pray, and sing as Paul and Silas did." That which cannot hinder our duty should not be so sadly lamented ; or, as the noble philosopher and emperor speaks, "How should that make the life of man worse, which doth not make worse the man himself?" If we can do what becomes us both to God and men, why should we be disturbed at what men do unto us? If they should take away our lives, they cannot take away our religion : we may be holy, when they will not let us be in the world. Yea, there are some particular virtues to be exercised in a suffering condition, which else we might not have had occasion for ; and so we have no reason to be angry if they have done .

us a courtesy, and make us better than we should have been, when they intended to have made us worse. And that is the fourth thing, which I desire may be considered.

4. We may make an advantage of every accident. According to that of the apostle, "All things shall work together for good to those that love God;" viz., by our prudence and observation, and taking those occasions which are offered us, and God's grace assisting us. It is not in our power always to be in health, or to be rich; but when sickness or poverty comes we can make a good use of it, and turn it into health and riches other ways. "The life of man," saith Plato, "is like to a game at tables, wherein two things are considerable; the one

within our power, and the other without ; the chance is not in us, but to play it well is. When we cannot have a good cast, it remains that by our skill and art we make a bad one good. What shall fall out, is not within us to choose ; but to manage and improve that which happens, and turn it to our advantage, by the goodness and grace of God, is within ourselves, and nothing that is without us can intermeddle, or be an impediment to us in it." Zeno, I remember, having lost all his goods by shipwreck, sought for no port but Athens, and betook himself from merchandize to the study of philosophy ; and so he revenged himself on Fortune, as he called it, by becoming a scholar and an honest man, crying out, " Now I made a good voyage when I lost all." Such a story Nicephorus tells

us, of one Cyrus, a courtier in the time of Theodosius the younger, who through the envious accusations of some favourites, being spoiled of his goods, of a Pagan he became a Christian, and of a Christian, a priest of God ; and at last attained the degree of a bishop. So true is that which a holy father said, " Danger is better than safety, and a storm more eligible than a perpetual calm : if before our fears we were the world's ; but after that we became God's." Which puts me in mind of an admirable prayer, or thanksgiving rather, of Philagrius : who hearing the same father expound to him Ps. lxxiii., as he lay under a sore sickness ; lift up his hands to heaven, and turning his eyes eastward, said, " I thank thee, O Father, the creator of thy mankind, that thou dost

D

us good against our wills, and purifiest our inward man by the outward ; I thank thee that thou conductest us by cross and contrary ways to a blessed end : according to such reasons as are known to thyself."

There is reason, then, we should be of good cheer, since things are as we please to make them. We need not be troubled, since what befalls us to our cross may serve a better end than that which we pursued : and the sighs and groans which our affliction extorted be converted into the joyful sound of praise to God. If we be made better men, more holy and severe in our lives, more certain of heaven, and more desirous to be there ; if we learn to know the world better, to place less confidence in it, and to expect nothing from it, then there is

no reason that we should accuse our fortune.

For who is a loser that parts with a friend, and gets God for his Father, and commits himself to his Providence? That loses a husband or a wife, and dwells for ever after in the arms of God, and is enflamed with a greater love of heavenly things? The world, perhaps, doth not love us; have we not reason to thank it, if it makes us to place our comfort and contentment in God, and a pure conscience? Or, they are unkind whom we have most obliged; but we repent not that we have done such ungrateful persons good: we still love them, and lay up hereafter our hopes and expectation above, and then, when we cast up our accounts, we find that we are gainers by them.

Thus, in all cases, we may say as he did, "O happy Providence, my good master, that teaches me better than I could do myself; who not only invites me, but compels me unto virtue! Now I am well, because I was ill; I have lost one thing and gained many—God, virtue, and myself; I have not what I desired, but I have what I ought to have desired. Another hath done for me that which I should have done myself."

5. Trouble makes every sad accident a double evil, and contentedness makes it none at all. If we will, it can do us no harm; if we give way to it, we also wound ourselves, and join with it to make ourselves miserable. There is a perfect emblem of our folly *in the story of a simple rustic, who,*

going home out of the field, laid the plough upon the ass's back, and then got up himself also ; and observing the beast to be oppressed, could find no better way to ease her but by laying the plough upon his own shoulder : so loading himself, and not at all easing her of her burthen.

Our bodies are compared by the ancients to the beasts ; the mind they call the man, the soul is ourself. When the body is oppressed with many miseries, by cares and grief, we think to ease it, when, alas ! we take not the loads off from it, but only lay them upon ourselves. The same burthen remains upon the poor beast, and the man also bears it upon his back. Like a bird in the lime-twigs, the more we flutter, the more we are entangled ; and that which was a single mischief

before, by our own follies becomes two, or a great many. But if we stir not at all, but be quiet and still, then we are what we were before this evil came; only our souls have the addition of the greatest joy and pleasure by the victory we have obtained. For it hath no small effect upon our souls, that we can be joyful when there is matter of sorrow, and that we can overcome the world, and depend upon nothing for our happiness but God and our own souls. Let us not sin then against reason, as well as God, providence, and religion, nor make ourselves more miserable than we need be. When we lose our estates, let us not lose our constancy and our cheerfulness too; if thou hast lost thy health, do not lose thy patience also; if thou must die a little sooner than

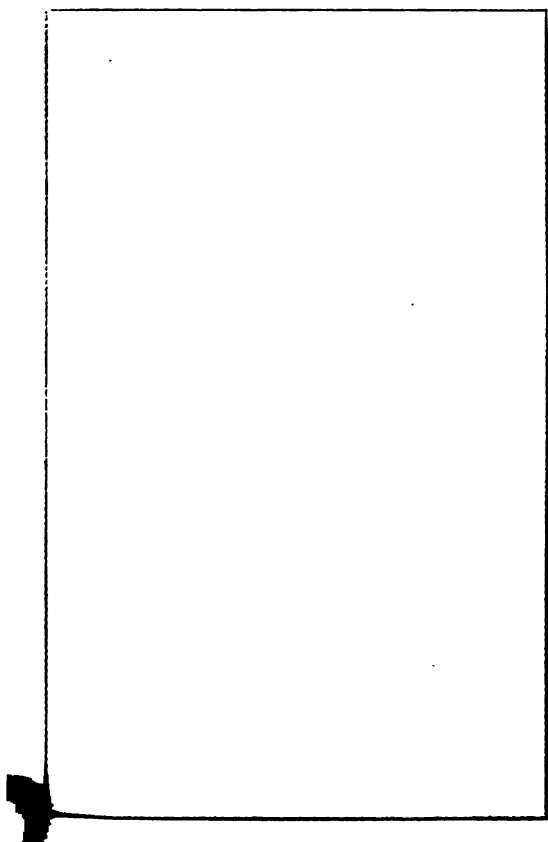
thou thoughtest, do not die unwillingly; if thou hast no friend, be not also thine own enemy; if others vex thee, do not withal vex thyself; if thou be ill to-day, be not also solicitous for to-morrow: "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." Which are almost the very words of Ben Syra, who gives this reason against such vexatious thoughts. Perhaps to-morrow shall not be, and so thou afflictest thyself for that, which nothing belongs to thee: we multiply our evils by our trouble, and bring those upon ourselves which perhaps were never intended for our portion. But our quietness disappoints the enemy, and will weary him in his assaults, when he sees that we do but grow better by what befalls us, and turn it into victory and triumph. So a wise man

once said, "No man ever reproached me more than once; for by patiently bearing his reproaches the first time, I taught him to abstain the second."



CHAPTER III.

**Some other Reasons, from the kindness
that may be intended us in every thing,
from the nature of the world, and the
nature of virtue.**



CHAPTER III.

BE not troubled at that which may be sent to breed the greatest joy. Not to speak of spiritual joys, which all troublesome things do breed in holy men, by making them more holy (according as the apostle saith—Heb. xii. 11), many sad accidents in men's account have proved the greatest means of temporal advantage, and ended in their outward prosperity. You know how it fared with Joseph, and that the chains of iron upon his legs were the occasion of the chain of gold about his neck ; his prison was the way to a throne. And (as St.

James speaks) "you have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." And Church history tells us that Exdokia, the daughter of a philosopher in Athens, being cast out of her father's house by her unkind brethren, and coming to Constantinople to beseech Theodosius, jun., the emperor, that he would right a poor orphan, found such favour in his eyes, that he made her his queen; and she got a palace, who sought but for a house. So true is that which the heathen observed, "Wrong oftentimes makes way for a better fortune." "A fever," Hippocrates observes, "puts an end to some diseases, and delivers those from death, who could no other way be cured;" and so Cardan tells us that

an imprisonment which once befell him, which he looked upon as the greatest disgrace, did him at length the greatest honour, and so wiped off all reproaches from his name, "*Ut nec suspicionis vestigium emicuerit,*" that there was not the least footstep left of any suspicion. The same author, who had as many strange and unusual incidents in his life as ever any man I read or heard of, tells us elsewhere this notable observation which he made: "It is fatal to me, that all good which befalls me begins in some evil." Consider then that what happens to one, yea, to many, may happen to thee. Why shouldest thou be troubled till thou knowest whether thou hast reason to be troubled or no? Wait, stay a while; thou canst but be troubled at the last; and perhaps thou

shalt have reason to rejoice both for that evil and for that thou wast not troubled. The conclusion of a matter is most to be regarded, and we can know little in the beginning.

Moses's rod was a serpent till he took it by the tail, and then it became what it was before ; and if we would lay hold on things only by their end, we should find many things that seem terrible and noxious to be benign and salutiferous. "*Finis, rerum caput est,*" as one wittily said—"Begin, therefore, at the end." Judge nothing, but hope well till thou seest the conclusion. Why shouldst thou not entertain thyself with good hopes now as well as at another time? Why wilt thou keep up and maintain the old piece of folly, to hope for much, when thou need hope for nothing ; and to hope for

nothing, when thou hast nothing to live upon but hopes? I mean, to be big with expectation in prosperity, when thou hast enough in present possession, and to be as full of despair in adversity, when expectation is all that thou hast left.

It is our grand fault that we are affected presently according as everything appears in the face, and we stay not till it turn about and show us the other side. So the pleasures of sin deceive us, which come on with a beauteous countenance and smiling looks, with a painted face and flattering words; but go off again with blushing and shame, with pain and sorrow, and all the ugliness appears when they have but turned their backs upon us. And so the cross accidents of the world do dismay us in such

part ; and if one member suffer, at least those which are next to it will suffer likewise ; and man hath no reason to repine that he fares as other pieces of this great body doth. Antoninus calls him that takes in ill part what here befalls him "an imposthume, and tumour, as it were, of the world ;" one that hath made an abscession and departure from the whole, like a bag of suppurated blood, that feels nothing, and hath no communion with the body.

8. Nor should we be troubled, say they, at what is profitable. There is nothing happens but what conduces, some way or other, to the good of the world, or is of advantage to some part of it, though not to thee. Many *changes* are necessary to the natural

preservation of things ; as thy friends must die, else there would not be room for others that are coming into being, and the world would be too little for its inhabitants ; others to the preservation of civil government, and others for the correction and amendment of men's manners. And as in all changes of the seasons of the year, we see thereby that fruits and the rest of things are the better provided for ; so they suppose that every other alteration that is in any part of nature tends to the preservation and continuance of it some way or other.

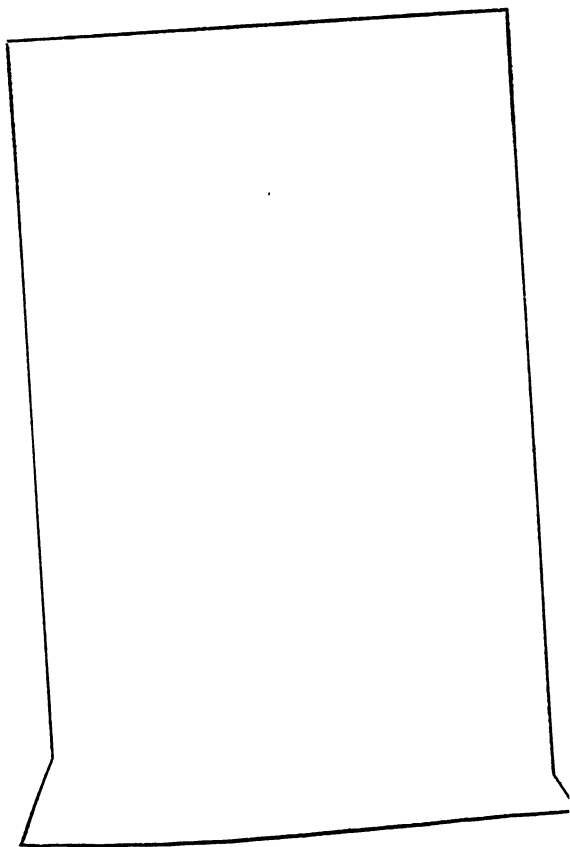
9. It is in vain likewise (as I touched before), in their opinion, to be troubled ; and patience is his remedy who hath no remedy else.

10. It is also to be considered, that it is no great proof of virtue not to trouble others ; but this is excellent, quietly to bear the trouble they give to us.



CHAPTER IV.

**Where we must lay our foundation of
settlement, and how it must be laid.**



CHAPTER IV.

THESE, and such like arguments,
I shall dismiss, and proceed rather
unto the second general part of my
discourse, which I propounded.

2. The rules we should observe to
preserve us from trouble, which I shall
lay down after I have premised these
two things :

1. Let us seek for them in their
right place, where they are to be found.
And then,

2. Let us firmly settle ourselves upon
such principles, else we shall always
be shaking.

For the first, that we may find out

the truest rules for the obtaining peace and quiet, let us resolve that evil is not so much in things as in ourselves; and if the evil which disquiets us be not in outward things, neither is the good which must give us rest to be found in them. All unquietness arises from the mind; and a plaster applied to the stomach will as soon cure a wounded conscience as riches, or anything in the world, heal a discontented mind. All the earthquakes and shakings are begot within our own bowels, and proceed not from the winds which blow without. This, therefore, is the first thing we must do, get acquaintance with our own hearts, and see the cause of all our grief; for nothing will heal us without ourselves. Our Saviour seems to intimate this truth to us in that phrase in the Gospel, he troubled

himself, as the margin hath it, which some think signifies the perfection of our Saviour, that nothing could trouble him ; but it also shows whence, properly, trouble arises ; viz., from the motion of man's own spirit, which our Saviour could compose ; but now he groaned, even to the troubling and disturbing of himself. From want of this easy observation it is that men labour for peace at endless expenses, both of pains, money, and time, yet never purchase it. Some seek for it in company and cheerful society, which they think can put away the melancholy ; but still they mind not that they carry the disease about them, which cannot so be cured. Others seek for it in a contrary way, of a solitary life, by quitting the affairs of the world, and retiring from all com-

alive, we are no longer quiet than the world pleaseth. Our peace is at the mercy of every report, of every man's mouth, and all the several accidents of evil that are in the world. If we be sick, and are afraid to die ; if we be in pain, and have no patience ; if we be scorned, and are proud ; if we be lessened in our estates, and are covetous, then nothing can help us from being miserable. But, on the contrary, if we do not fear death so much as an ill life ; if we think impatience and murmuring a worse disease than the gout ; if we think pride to be the greatest reproach and the highest disgrace, and take covetousness to be the greatest beggary and basest poverty, there is no harm a man can feel by death, or sickness, or scorn, or want. When all the alterations in the world

will not quiet us, one alteration will, and that is the change of our opinions concerning things and our estimate of them ; by this one, more will be done than by ten thousand changes. The heathen could say, That no man can make another a slave, unless he hath first enslaved himself. Be not enthralled to pleasure or pain, to hope or fear, to life or death, and thou art free. What he said in this case we may say in all other ; nothing can overcome him that is not first overcome by his own imaginations and passions. Thou art poor, perhaps, and contemned. What of that, if thou hast not this beggarly thought also, that riches and honour make a man? Another hath a bad opinion of thee ; but what then, if thou hast not also a foolish opinion that men's censures are much to be

minded? In everything rule but thyself, and thou shalt be at ease, because thou wilt be thyself; but never wilt thou till then be eased. For remember this as a true saying (which may be added to the reasons foregoing): A proud man hath no God; an unpeaceable man hath no neighbour; a distrustful man hath no friend; and he that is discontented hath not himself.

Not the rich man, nor the wise man, always possesses himself; but "in your patience," saith our Saviour, "possess ye your souls."

We have found, therefore, where we must begin to lay a foundation for all our rules; viz., in ourselves. But then, secondly, we must build and firmly seat ourselves upon these principles; for if we do not use them, notwith-

standing all that I can say, we shall be troubled. By the former discourse you may easily perceive that we cannot be at peace without our own pains. There is nothing that I can say will work as physic doth in the body by its natural force, whether you think of it or no ; but everything must have the help of your serious consideration, and you must frequently practise according to what you think. As the things that will give us peace must be laid in ourselves, so they cannot be there laid without ourselves. They cannot be applied to our minds as a salve, or an ointment to our bodies ; but by the force of our own thoughts we must work them into our souls.

One thing more of this nature I must add ; but I will reserve it till the conclusion, and now give you those

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CHAPTER V.

I.

KNOW thy duty, and do it. Charge not thyself with more than thy duty, as those do who think they must always be at prayer, or hearing sermons, or reading spiritual books, or do make rash vows ; nor with less than thy duty, as those do who content themselves with the observation of some precepts, or a seldom regard to their whole work ; but labour to understand what God requires, and industriously labour to perform it. For it is impossible that either of those in the extremes should be at rest ; the

one never, because he can never do all that which he thinks he ought ; the other, not always, because his conscience will sometimes rebuke him that he is an hypocrite ; *i.e.* a partial Christian. An ignorant person, therefore, or an idle person, can have no true peace. We must be, first, inquisitive into the Gospel, and labour to understand what we have to do ; secondly, and then resolve heartily, and endeavour seriously to do it all ; thirdly, and then enquire what remedy there is if we fail and fall short after these hearty and serious endeavours. The first and last of these do most concern our knowledge, the middle our practice ; and the knowing and doing according to our knowledge, and making use of the antidote when we have miscarried, will keep us in peace, from

that trouble which arises from sin. A wicked man cannot be in peace, if he understand himself; and you must not think that I come to prescribe to any but those who will be Christ's disciples, and follow him; for to such the text speaks. And a man of a weak understanding will not be in peace; therefore we must grow in knowledge, if we would be without trouble; and a Christian that walks carelessly, without observance of himself, ought not to be in peace till he grow more watchful; and then if he be surprised, he knows where to take refuge. But there is no sanctuary in Christ for a trifling and unguarded spirit, without great sorrow, repentance, amendment, and after-care and diligence. We must understand that every indisposition of body is not a sin, and that our peace must not be

broken because we are not always in the same temper, nor cannot so cheerfully do our duty. We must know that a sudden surprisal, a hasty passion, a sudden thought, is not to break us all in pieces ; and, on the contrary, we must know that our voluntary admission even of these, or letting of them stay, our not watching against them, and our frequent falling into that sin, which at first did but surprise us, must trouble us ; and there is no peace unless we grow better, and more seriously mind our duty.

Study, therefore, the Christian religion, as it is contained in the Gospel, and then thou wilt find that there is but this one thing more to be done to keep thee in peace ; viz., a careful endeavour to live as thou art directed. And the sum of the Gospel is this :

“Live soberly, righteously, and godly ;” and where, after all our care, we fail, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins ; and the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all unrighteousness.” This first rule I conceive will make very good way for all the rest into our souls, and will have a kind of universal influence into us upon all occasions. We need be offended at nothing, if we have a care not to offend God. And I think he said truly who affirmed, “That there is no joy but in God, and no sorrow but in an evil conscience.”

II. As thou must know thy duty, so labour to distinguish between thy own duty and another man’s ; and this will keep thee from being troubled at the actions and carriage of men in the

world towards thee and others. If men slight us, and despise us, and speak evil unjustly of us, and take away our good name, yea, if they take away our estates, if we be not angry, nor filled with hatred and despite, nor retaliate their wrongs, then it is not we, but they, that ought to be troubled: our duty is secured, and therein we should rejoice. And I may take occasion here to observe that we may learn our duty by their ill behaviour, and study the more to avoid those things in ourselves which do so much displease us in others. If we be at all troubled, let it be rather for the sin of him that injures us than for our own suffering.

This rule may be put into other words, which will make it, perhaps, comprehensive of more cases. Let us

consider what is in our own power and what is not.

There is nothing in thy own power but thy own will and choice ; all other things are in the hand of God, or in the power of other men. It was never in thy power to be handsome, or witty, or born of noble or virtuous parents. Why then art thou troubled about such things? But it is in thy power to be good and virtuous thyself, to have a beauteous soul, and to be rich in good works ; and if thou be not thus, then thou art concerned. If men's tongues be unruly, and their hands be violent, and thou sufferest unjustly by both, how canst thou help it? Thou art not troubled if a dog bark, or an ass kick, because it is their nature, and thou canst not rule their motions : and here the case is not at

all altered ; for the tongues of men are as little in thy hands as the mouths of dogs. These do always bark (as a judicious author speaks) at those they know not, and it is their nature to accompany one another in those clamours : so it is with the inconsiderate multitude. Since these, therefore, are wholly in another's choice, they fall not under thy deliberation, and therefore are not fit for thy passion. Our anger at him that reproaches us may make us miserable, but it cannot prevent what he hath in his power. Thou mayest do well, and none can hinder it ; but to meet with no opposition is not in thy choice. Do what thou canst, the world may make thee suffer ; but do what they can, thou mayest suffer contentedly. A philosopher, they say, comforted himself on this fashion when his daugh-

ter proved a wanton. "It is none of my fault," said he, "and therefore there is no reason it should be my misery." If our children be not as we would have them, if we endeavour they should be so, we may comfort ourselves with such arguments as these : It is in my power to instruct them, but not to make them good ; I can do my duty to them, but cannot make them dutiful to me. Consider, I beseech you, what an unreasonable thing it is that we should depend upon the will of other men for our peace, and not upon our own ; or, as a great philosopher phraseth it, that we should have no more reverence to ourselves than to place our happiness in other men's souls. If they have shown what is in their hand and power to do, let us next show what is in ours, and that is,

not to be troubled ; and so let the matter rest, unless they have a mind to renew a vain attempt. By observing of this rule, we shall reap sundry benefits. The censures of men will not molest us, because it is no part of our duty that men should speak well of what is well done. That we should have the approbation of others is not in our choice, and so it is not in our charge. It is not incumbent upon us, that nothing we do be not misinterpreted and wrong apprehended. In doing well is our comfort, and in speaking well of others this let us mind, and think ourselves no further concerned. It will keep us likewise from intermeddling with other men's business, and engaging ourselves in matters that belong not to us, which breeds men no small trouble.

It is our duty to do well, but not to censure other men's doings. When the scholars of R. Nechoniah asked him how he prolonged his days to such an age, he answered, "I never sought my own honour by another's disgrace, nor ever spoke evil of another, and was liberal of the goods which God hath given me." This was his way to live in quiet, which he thought was the way to live long ; but it is too common a fault among us that we put our hands into other men's work, and so trouble both ourselves and them also. The business of a subject is to obey his prince, and of a servant to execute his master's commands. But men foolishly disturb the world by taking upon them the authority of calling their prudence in question, and finding fault with

that which they have nothing to do withal.

This rids us likewise of curiosity, and enquiring into other men's affairs, or matters done abroad, which, as the wise man notes (Eccles. vii. 21), may occasion some disquiet unto us, unless we relieve ourselves at last by this rule, whereby we might have found help at first by not hearkening to private talk.



CHAPTER VI.

**Two Rules more, concerning the choice of
means, and carelessness about events.**

Solomon bids us not only keep the command, which is doing of our duty, but also discern time and judgment, which relates to our discretion.

Some men will bring to pass the same thing, which others do but endeavour, with more facility and less noise, because, as the same wise man saith, "Wisdom is better than strength." As far, therefore, as is lawful, let us become all things to all men, that we may live in peace and quietness ; and let us not by a tumultuous handling of any matter give them an occasion to oppose themselves unto us. Yea, prudence will teach us to let some things alone, and not meddle with them, being either needless or else dangerous. As Diogenes said to a man that desired his letters of commendation, "That thou art a man, everyone that sees

thee will know ; and whether thou beest good or bad, he will soon know that hath any skill to make a difference ; but if he have no skill, he will not know thee, though I write a thousand times unto him." But when it is fit to do anything, let us remember that there is a nearer way sometimes to the end of a business than that which is straight forward, and it will be less trouble to seek it out than to go on in the ordinary path. The purchase of peace is worth all our study ; and if we can obtain it by art and prudent compliances, we shall find that we are gainers by our labour. Rashness and violence sometimes create us more trouble than men would otherwise have brought upon us. We run ourselves into broils and tumults, and kindle flames about us

with our own breath, when other men would let us live in peace, and not disturb us. Let us, therefore, not only be innocent, and mean well, but wise also, and manage well. Next, after honesty and integrity, let us study prudence and discretion, so as not to be alike zealous in all things, not passionate and hasty in anything, but, as St. James saith, "to shew out of a good conversation our works with meekness of wisdom." This prudence is a large thing, and of great use in every action of our life, and therefore it must not be expected that I speak to every part of it; but I shall conclude this particular with a saying of one of the Hebrew doctors: "There are three sorts of men whose life is no life, *misericordes*, *iracundi*, *melancholici*: those that pass by all faults;

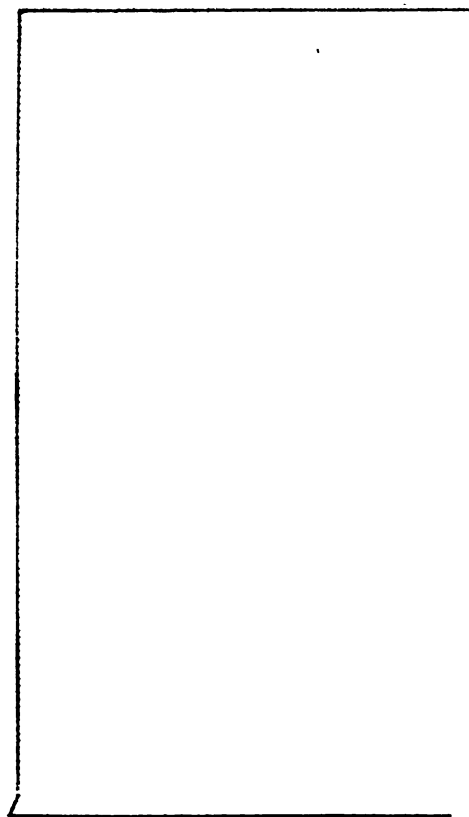
those that are angry at all, and will pass by none ; those that are melancholy, as though they were angry and displeased, not only with all others, but with themselves.

IV. When thou hast used thy prudence, be not solicitous about events. This would be a great preservative against fears of what may happen, and against vexation for what has happened ; for to what purpose should we trouble ourselves either with one or the other, when all our prudence and skill cannot help it? Fear, indeed, betrays our succours, and disarms us of our weapons, and makes us run into those dangers which our prudence might have prevented. If we can, therefore, act prudently and discreetly, it supposes that we are not

dispirited, and will likewise secure us from so being. And if the doing as well as we can, and as wisely as we are able, will satisfy us beforehand, and make timorousness unreasonable, then so it will satisfy us afterward in cross events, and not let us trouble ourselves with a fruitless repentance. The counsel of the son of Syrach is excellently good: "Do nothing without advice, and when thou hast once done, repent not." For I believe most men may say the same which that person did who had so many strange changes in his life: "If I had not used not to repent of anything I had voluntarily done, even of that which fell out ill, I had lived altogether miserable." Do thy best, therefore, and then leave the success to God.

CHAPTER VII.

The knowledge of ourselves, together with consideration of the necessary consequences of every thing, are two other remedies against Trouble.



CHAPTER VII.

V.

CONSIDER thy own sufficiency, and undertake no more than is fitting for thee. If we did live by this rule, and not strain beyond our ability, we should be kept from trouble in our employments. "As one may," was a saying of Socrates, and a sentence of great import. Let every one know what he can do, and let him not meddle with matters too high for him, and so he may quiet himself, as David tells us, by his experience. (Ps. cxxxi. 1, 2.) Let our desires be according to our power, and let that also be the measure of our actions, and then we

shall not implicate and intangle ourselves in things beyond our reach. The pye must not think to sing as well as the nightingale, nor the parrot to talk like a man : everyone is not made to govern states, to distribute justice, to resolve great doubts, and to end controversies. Some men must be content to govern their families and themselves, to understand plain truths, and practise them, leaving the rest to men of greater depth and learning. So Siracides directs : " Seek not out things that are too hard for thee, neither search the things that are above thy strength ; that which is commanded thee, think upon with reverence ; for it is not needful to see the things that are secret." What he saith in that one instance may be said in all other. Take not upon thee a

calling that is above thy wisdom, and strength, and spirit ; for when thou seest thou canst not do these things which by thy place and office thou art engaged unto, it will be a matter of infinite vexation and endless distraction to thy mind. It is of singular use here for every man to observe his own genius and disposition, and to follow that, being contented to be ignorant of, and unable for, other things that are without his capacity. It is enough for such a little creature as a man to be good for one thing, and so we may stand in need of one another. If he will venture upon things without his compass, at his own peril and trouble it must be ; and that were the less matter, if it would not hazard other men's trouble also. "Without eyes thou shalt want light," saith

that wise man in the fore-mentioned chapter; and what wonder is it if thou dost? If men weary themselves in vain when they have no aptness to such things as they undertake, it is but natural, and may be amended by the old rule, "Know thyself." "My son," saith Siracides, "prove thy soul in thy life, and see what is evil for it, and give not that unto it; for all things are not profitable for all men, neither hath every soul pleasure in every thing." And as an appendix to this rule, give me leave to add this: Employ thyself in as few things as thou canst; undertake not much business. This is the royal philosopher's lure: "Do but a little, if thou wouldst have much quiet: peace arises not only from good employments, but also from little: mind always needful things,

and let the rest alone." Therefore, when we are going to do anything, let us say, "Is not this in the number of needless things?" but as then he adds, have a care not only to cut off impertinent and unnecessary actions, but thoughts and imaginations also. Our Saviour seems to say the same in the Gospel of St. Luke: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things." Flies disquiet us not by their strength, but by their number; and so do great affairs not vex us so much as a number of businesses of little value. But if we must be employed in many, let us not make too much haste to have done, for we shall but incumber ourselves; and let us dispatch them in due order, one after another, or else we shall do none well to our own content.

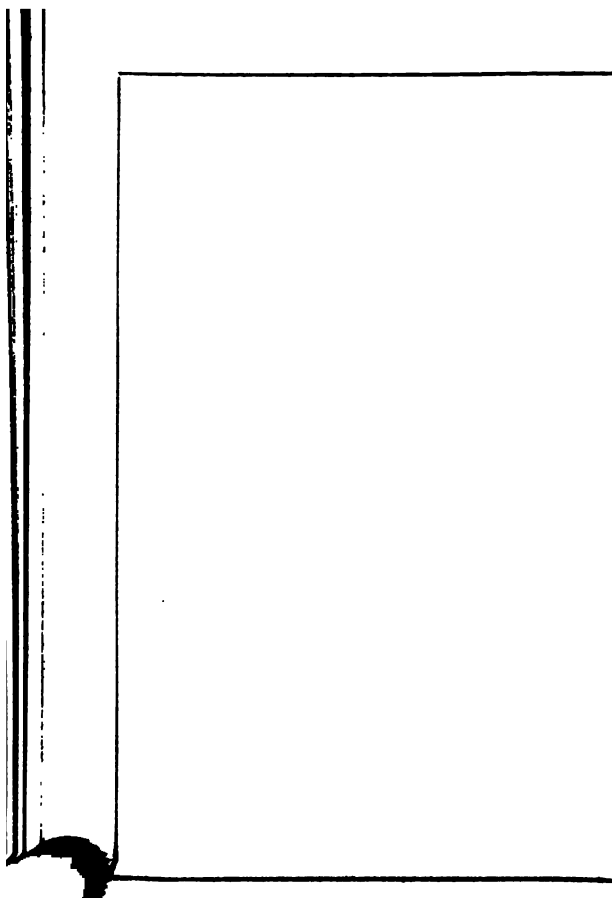
VI. Consider the consequent of every action, and of every thing ; and either choose all its appendant troubles and inconveniences, or else let it alone. There is nothing in the world but it is as a lily among the thorns ; every rose hath its prickles about it ; and there is nothing so desirable but it hath some associates we could wish separate from its company. The best thing in the world hath its faults ; and therefore, if we would have peace, let us consider always the *τὰ ἀκόλουθα*, as Epictetus speaks, the things that follow or accompany every action and every condition ; and either let us not choose the thing itself, or else receive all its retinue together with it. By this means we shall save ourselves the trouble of repentance for a foolish choice, and we shall not be put to the

unwise man's complaint, "Non putáram, I never dreamt of this ; I imagined not there had been all these unpleasing things mixed with what I desired." Who should have thought of this but thyself? How like an idiot dost thou look in thy own thoughts when thou art thus surprised? How ridiculous doth it appear for a man to sit down and cry like a child, "If I had known thus much, I would never have made such a venture ; I would not have meddled with this calling or business, if I had thought there would have been so much trouble in it?" Thou shouldst have thought of this before, and then have made thy choice. Honour must be chosen, Cum suo onere, with its suitors, and followers, and public appearances. And so marriage must be chosen, with all its cares,



CHAPTER VIII.

It is of great import to consider well what we enjoy, and we should cast that in the balance against our wants, which is the substance of one Rule more.



CHAPTER VIII.

VII.

COMPARE what thou hast not with what thou hast, and see which is better. This will keep thee from trouble for what thou wantest, and thy desires shall not disquiet thee. Tell all the joints of thy body, and compare them with the want of a finger, or an eye, or any such member. Whether is a hundred or one more? Thou art poor, but thou art well, and hast many good friends, or perhaps thou hast none ; but thou hast all the host of heaven, the sun, moon, and stars, and all the elements, and the Providence of God, and the charity of

all well-disposed people, as much as another man. Thou mayst walk in thy neighbour's field, yea, in thy enemy's ground, and enjoy all the pleasures of the morning, and recreate thyself with all the sweet odours, and behold the beauty of all God's creatures, and delight in that which God delights in. Why then shouldest thou be so distracted? Thou goest a journey, and art disappointed of thy ends, and dost lose thy labour, but thou escapedst thieves and robbers; or villains set upon thee, but they saved thy life, they have not robbed thee of thy land. Thou hast lost a child perhaps, but how many hast thou remaining? or is not thy husband or wife well? or, if they be gone, and thy estate also gone, and thou thyself sick also, and the case be supposed as bad as can be,

yet art thou not alive? and what wouldest thou not part withal rather than die? Thou wilt not, I know, exchange thy hopes of staying in the world for all things else; for they are nothing unto thee if thou beest not.

But you will say, "This is very cold comfort to consider that a man lives." Think then, further, that there are thousands of good people that pray for thee every day, and all thy good neighbours pity thee, and will strive to relieve thee; or, if this will not do, consider that though thou wantest temporal things, yet thou enjoyest spiritual. Thou art sick, but thy sins are pardoned, for to Christ's disciples I speak; or, if they be not, and I must say something to others, then I say: First, I cannot blame thee that thou art troubled; but then, why dost

thou trouble thyself that thou art poor, or sick, or anything else, but only for this, that thou art a condemned sinner? What should a damned man do with riches? Why dost thou trouble thyself about such little things as the loss of a child, when thou hast lost thy soul? Yea, why art thou troubled more that thou art sick than that thou art not like to be saved? What folly was it in the man that complained his stocking was rent, and minded not the wound of his leg? One would think the great trouble should swallow up the other, though it cannot cure it; and thou shouldest be most solicitous how to get sin pardoned, whether thou dost live or die. But,

Secondly, if thy sin be not pardoned, and therefore thou desirest to be well, yet it is a huge mercy that there are

hopes it may be pardoned. And if thou dost understand thyself, thou wouldest not lose these very hopes for all the riches in the world and the best state of health thou canst imagine. But, to return, suppose thou art a person truly fearing God, but art troubled that thou hast not such sweet friends, and good company, and delightful society, and art not so esteemed and regarded, or hast not the fortune which attends upon others ; yet thou hast thyself, and thou hast a good conscience, and thou hast God, and his Son, and Holy Spirit, and the promises of the Gospel, and the hopes of heaven, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Which now dost thou judge greater, thy wants or enjoyments ? Such a man who hath deserved of thee doth not love thee, perhaps, nor regard thee. But what

then? He cannot take away the love of God nor the love of his children ; no, nor thy love to him neither.

Now, if it be thus in these and all other cases, I pray tell me who will pity him that hath many soft pillows whereon to lay his head, and he will needs lay it on a stone? that hath many pleasant places wherein to repose himself, and none will serve him, but he will sit upon a bush of thorns? Surely they are in love with sorrow and melancholy who enjoy so many blessings and contentments, and will forsake the pleasure of them to pine away in the company of their wants. Consider, I beseech you, is there more cause to be troubled for the want of those, or to rejoice for the possession of these other? or by what reason shall the absence of some things spoil

all the sweetness of those that remain? Why should those be more able to comfort us, if we had them, than these we now have? This is the most manifest cheat of ourselves that can be. No man likes that which is his own, and yet everyone thinks that he shall be well pleased in the condition of another man. He thinks that he shall be contented with that wherein the other man is not contented himself. By what argument, I pray you, is this concluded? How foolishly do we suborn our desires and hopes to betray our duty and comfort? If he be not contented in his condition (but perhaps thinks ours to be better, in which we also are not contented), why should we think to find contentment in it? But if he be content in his estate, then so may we be in ours.

What any man is, that every man may be. Therefore, if thou canst not cease complaining. I must advise thee to handle thyself roughly ; and when thy mind is troubled, whines and cries for such and such a bauble, do with it as we do by children when they cry they know not for what, affright it with the representation of some terrible thing ; show it the pains of hell, ask it how it likes to burn in eternal flames, and whether it can be contented to be damned. Let it see there is something indeed to cry for, if it cannot be quiet ; and bid it tell thee if it be an easy thing to dwell with everlasting burnings. And when it starts at the thought of them, bid it be quiet then, and well pleased, if it can fly from such a misery, whatsoever else it can endure.

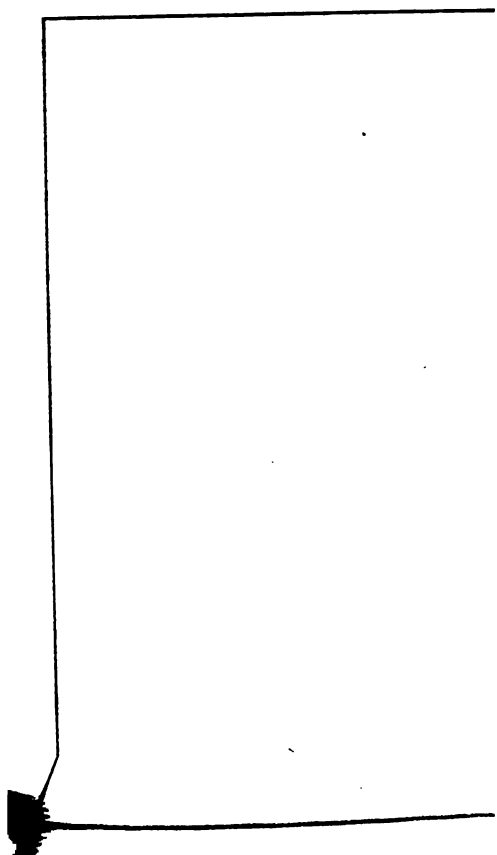
And to make this consideration the more efficacious, when thou considerest what thou hast, frame to thyself such an apprehension of that thing as thou hast of it when thou dost want it. Understand now what thou dost enjoy, as thou wouldst do if thou didst not enjoy it. Consider how desirable health is to a sick man, or friends to a poor man ; and so let them be in thy eyes. Thou wantest plenty, but thou hast enough ; thou wantest riches, but thou hast health ; thou wantest health, but thy sins are forgiven. Consider now, suppose thou wert sick, or thy sins were not pardoned, in what a case wouldst thou then be ? What wouldst thou most complain of, for the want of them, or for the want of the things thou now groanest under ? Answerable to the trouble thou shouldst

have in the want of those things, let thy quiet be now in the possession of them ; and as thy grief for the want of such things would exceed all that which is in thee at present for the want of others, so let thy present thankfulness and contentedness be, that thou wantest them not, which is another way of making this rule efficacious : Compare the want of the things thou hast with the want of the things thou now hast not.



CHAPTER IX.

Two Considerations more; one, of the wants of others; another, of the uncertainty of our own enjoyments.



CHAPTER IX.

VIII.

IF thou dost consider what thou wantest, and canst not but look upon it, and compare thyself with others, then compare thyself with all men, and not with a few ; or, secondly, with the whole condition of those few, and not with some part of it ; and this will be a remedy for the same kind of trouble, from discontent, and from envy, with all evils of like nature. First, I say, look upon all men, and thou wilt see there are thousands of persons with whom thou wouldst not for any thing change conditions. By what law then is it that thou must

needs only gaze above, and take no notice of those beneath? that thou must look on him only who is carried on men's shoulders 'as one did excellently resemble this folly, and think it is a fine thing to be so mounted; and never think of the poor men that carry him, in whose place thou wouldst by no means stand. Thou art not alone in the condition wherein thou art; yea, there are thousands in a worse; and yet, which is more, they are contented. Down with thy high looks, and stare not only upon the great mountains; be content to take notice of those a little that sit in the valleys, yea, of those that embrace a dunghill. Or, secondly, if thou canst not keep thy eyes off from those great men, then compare thyself with the whole of them, and not with some one piece,

and then tell me whether thou wouldst wholly change conditions with them, and be as they are. Are there not many inconveniences in their condition which thou wouldst not meddle withal? thou wouldst have his wealth, but not his cares, nor his fears, nor his ignorance, perhaps, and folly, nor wouldst thou be troubled with his vices. To be short, none of you would have been the rich man in the Gospel for all the world. Lazarus, as miserable as he was, would not have been in his case. Nay, you will scarce fancy any man so complete, but there is something or other in ourselves that we fancy more, which we would keep, and have all that he hath too. But why must thou needs have all? Why must every one else be deplumed for to trim thee? Why must none else

be pleased but thy own single self? And, besides, seeing there is something in thyself which thou lovest more than all the world, and wouldest still be that, whatsoever else thou changest ; why cannot that content thee, and give thee rest, seeing it is so much worth to thee? He that will go about to make an answer to me will cure himself, unless he resolve to be unreasonable. Let me subjoin this one rule, which tends to the same purpose with the former, and will comprehend all of this kind : Distinguish between real needs and artificial ; *i.e.* those needs which God made, and those which thy own fancy hath created. It is most certain that the needs which God hath made are but few, and soon filled, and God hath made provision for them ; *therefore*, all this kind of trouble flows

from thy own fancy, which, if it pleases, can create a thousand necessities to itself, which are indeed none at all ; and by the same reason that it makes a thousand, it may create ten times as many ; for there are no limits when once we are gone beyond nature and necessity. If these needs, therefore, are a burthen to thee, blame nothing but thy own folly, and by the help of God's grace seek a cure in thyself. Reduce thyself to nature and real needs, and thou wilt never be troubled about these matters, because thou wilt always have what nature desires ; yea, the way to have that is not to desire any more. So a wise man among the Jews once said. Seek that which is necessary for thee, and leave that which is not necessary ; for by leaving to follow that which is not necessary,

thou wilt obtain that which is. I remember that when some blamed Cato, that such a man as he would be in want (as we speak), he blamed them rather because they could not want; viz., such things as those which are not really needful for us. And I think he might have blamed them also upon this score, that they were in want, because they thought they were. And if we would but deny ourselves sometimes in unnecessary desires, even when it is in our hands to humour ourselves, and gratify our desires, it would be of excellent use; for we must remember that as long as the things of this world are empty and finite, our trouble will not end by satisfying, but by ceasing our desires.

IX. Count nothing certain that is

without thyself; and think thy soul, not thy body, to be thyself. Thou mayst be certain of thy own choice if thou knowest thyself; and thou canst tell what thou wilt do; but thou canst not be certain what will be in the world, or what other men will do; and therefore reckon upon nothing as constant and stable, but thy own resolution, which may be constant if thou pleasest. And this will keep thee from trouble about what thou lovest. When health and riches, and such like things, are gone, then thou canst say, I never made account that they would stay. It was accounted of old a piece of great wisdom to wonder at nothing; and this is the way to it, which thing alone the poet thought was almost enough to make one happy, and keep him so.

Nil admirari propè res est una, Numici,
Solâque quæ possit facere et servare beatum.

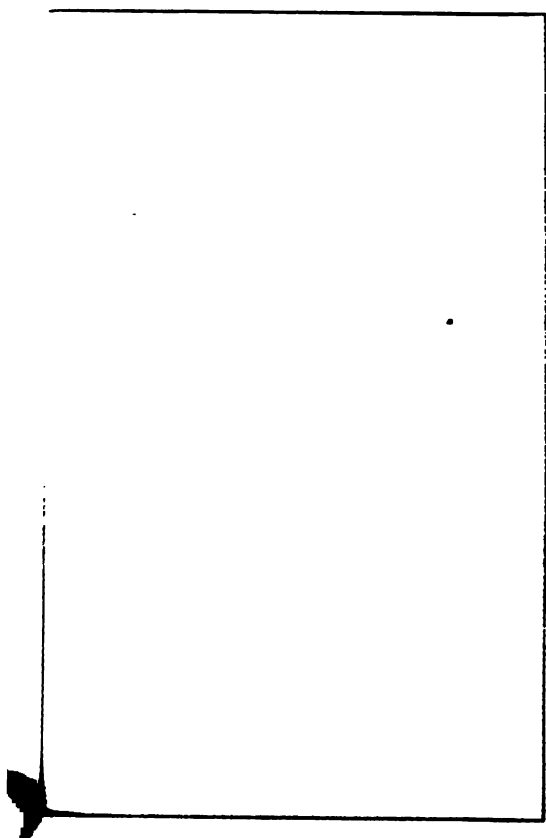
Horat.

But he will not cease to admire that
knows not the nature of things ; and
he knows nothing that doth not see
they are constant only in inconstancy.



CHAPTER X.

Three Directions more, showing how we should shut the world out of ourselves, and avoid self-flattery, and take heed of a rash anger at our own selves.



CHAPTER X.

X.

WHAT is without thee, keep it as far as is possible without thee. Let many things not come in unto thee, nor do thou go out to them; *i.e.* let not them into thy heart by love, and let not thy heart go out to them by desire. Make few things to become a piece of thyself which are without thyself; for if thou lovest many things of which, as I said before, thou canst not be certain, thou wilt be often troubled at their loss or at their danger. This rule may serve also to fortify you against the same kind of trouble,

among others, for the relief of which I prescribed the former. Keep but every thing there where it is, and all is safe. If the world change and alter, that is nothing unto us, if it be not within us. If it have no hold of our hearts, how are we concerned in its various mutations? We shall never suffer together with the world if it be not a part of us. But if we set open the door, and entertain it ; if we embrace it, and let it dwell in us by our love cleaving to it, then we shall be as it is ; and nothing can give us a remedy but the casting of it out again, and setting it where it was, quite out of ourselves. It is a true rule, that no good can bring us any pleasure but that against whose loss we are prepared. He that is in fear doth not sincerely enjoy ; and it is as true that we

shall have no mind to lose that which we love dearly. Now what a miserable case is this, to be troubled with fear while we have a thing, lest we lose it; and be troubled with grief when it is gone, because we have lost it! But I have taught you how to provide against both these, and against all sudden accidents and changes that are in the world. Keep thyself as thou art; let very little in which is without. I say very little, because some things press into our hearts, and get into our affections, whether we will or no. We cannot but love some agreeable persons, and there are others whom we ought to love because of the obligation we have to them. These take such hold of our hearts that they become a piece of it, and we seem to have lost half of ourselves when they are gone.

Against this there is no remedy but one: since they will be within us, let them not take up the best room there. Make them know their place, and keep them below God and our Saviour and his precious promises. Do but love thy Creator and Redeemer above all, and thou wilt find fulness and satisfaction there when the departure of a very dear friend hath made a wide breach and a great vacuity in thy heart. The next rule also may help to give some relief, if thou dost but use it in good time.

XI. Do not promise thyself that which God never promised thee. This heals all the evils which arise from vain hopes, and cools the anger of those sores which are caused by frustration of our expectations. It is lawful

to desire several things which are uncertain, if God see them good for us ; but let us not promise to ourselves any of them. Do not enjoy thy friends, or any other good, as if thou hadst a lease of them for life. Do not entertain thy thoughts with promises of contentment in such a relation or such a condition, nor of success in such an enterprise—no, though thou goest about it wisely ; but promise to thyself pardon of sin and eternal life, if thou dost thy duty, and the grace of God to help thee for to do it, if thou pray for it and wilt use it ; for all these things God hath promised to give us. Solomon saith (Eccles. ix. 11) that “the race is not to the swift . . . but time and chance happeneth to them all.” Now, because men know not the time when things will alter, and, which is

worse, promise to themselves those things, as if there were no time nor chance but what they fancy, therefore he saith (*v.* 12) that "evil falleth suddenly[and therefore sadly] upon them." Hope and fear are two great instruments of our trouble, and we must cure them both, as I have directed in this and the former rule. And if we will hope for anything, let it be (as I said before) in the days of our sorrow and adversity to support our heaviness, not in the days of prosperity to please our fancy. We have good things enough, then, to comfort us ; and if we will spend our thoughts in airy hopes, we make ourselves miserable two ways—we lose the pleasure of what we have, and never enjoy what we look for ; and therefore I think he made a good answer who, being asked

which man's grief never ceased, said, *Cujus cor non acquiescit in præsenti-bus*, whose heart is not contented with what he hath at present. And he, likewise, was well employed who for fifteen years together, with great pains, endeavoured to get the habit of hoping for nothing, especially since, as he saith, he did obtain it; for no question he found great ease to his spirit by it.

XII. Think that thou art most angry at thyself when thou dost amend. Many create themselves no small trouble by being troubled at the disorder and disquiet of their spirit in cross accidents; and I give this rule to take off all that trouble which proceeds from displeasure against ourselves for our unquietness under God's hand, or that

trouble which we feel for the sins we have admitted, if it hinder our duty ; and this, indeed, is oftentimes the greatest inquietude and trouble of all other. Men roll their souls in very vexatious and impatient thoughts, because they were vexed and impatient, and so they commit that again which they should cure ; and unless they will cease it, the disease will grow more desperate ; for they are impatient if their trouble be not cured, and their disease instantly healed. But, alas ! this which they take for the medicine is the very disease. Trouble doth but make the sore rankle and fester the more, and inflame the fever to a greater heat ; therefore, coolly and mildly seek to amend thy trouble by some of the former rules that I have proposed. Remember, the more thou vexest thyself, the further

thou art from being healed, and, like a bird that is restless in a net, thou art more intangled and perplexed. Go, therefore, seriously always and considerately about the cure, when thou art troubled at any accident, and think that this is a signification of the greatest displeasure against thyself when thou art amended, and thy mind is again in peace. You may see how calmly David argues himself into a stillness, Psalm xlii. 11; xliii. 5: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" If he had fretted at this disquiet which was in him, and raised storms against himself, the commotion would but have been like a new boisterous wind upon the face of the sea already troubled, which would but make it more rough and restless. Let the sun shine, rather than the wind blow: I mean, with a clear understand-

ing labour placidly to compose and
appease thy heart, and not by fresh
gusts of black passion bluster and rage
against thyself.



CHAPTER XI.

**Humility and self-annihilation ; knowledge
and judgment ; simplicity and purity ;
constancy and fixedness in one thing ;
are four excellent means to keep us
from Trouble.**



CHAPTER XI.

TH**ERE** are three or four rules that are more general and universal, which perhaps may serve instead of all the rest for to heal all troubles from without, which, because they are so large and comprehensive, I will super-add.

1. Have a little care of thyself. A proud man and a covetous never are at rest. The leaves of the tall trees shake with every breath; and no man can open his mouth to whisper an ill word, but a proud man is disturbed; whereas the observance of this rule will make us say, when we are con-

temned and despised, that they cannot think so low of us as we of ourselves, and then we shall not be moved. It will help us in poverty, sickness, and all misfortunes, whilst we say, Less than the least of all God's mercies. Our conceit, sure, of ourselves is the cause that we quarrel at everything that happens, as if we were such considerable creatures that everything must be done to please us, and God must rule the whole world according to our humour ; yea, and nobody else must be served and gratified but ourselves. Some things there are which fall out that are good for others when they are ill for me, and therefore it is a high piece of pride for me to be troubled, as if I were such a goodly thing that God should mind none but me, and all creatures in heaven and

in earth should wait upon me, doing everything according to my liking.

Away with this fond love of ourselves, and ridiculous over-weening ! I beseech you let us know ourselves, and all will be well. There is no reason that such poor things as we are should take matters so ill and unkindly at God's hands as we do. We are well used if we were in a worse condition.

2. Labour to understand the true nature and value of everything. I will instance in a few things : That which is future is uncertain ; that which is born may die ; that which once was not may again not be ; what hath happened to others may happen to me ; that which hath its value from fancy is not much worth ; that which can be bought cannot be great ; that which can do us no harm unless we

will need not be feared; that which a man can live without, he need not love. Such like rules as these will the consideration of the nature of things teach us: and then, when we have learned what they are, let us remember the usual saying of Epictetus, If thou lovest a pet, remember it is a pet which thou lovest: *i. e.* a thing of a base nature, and also brittle and soon broken, and it is no great wonder nor no great matter if it be. So in all other cases. If thou lovest a flower, or a man, remember it is but a flower, but a man; if thou hopest for anything, remember thou hast but only hopes; and thus doing, thou wilt find much quiet from many occasions of trouble.

3. Have but one end, and bring all things to that; which, in the great

emperor's phrase, is thus expressed, Reduce thyself to a simplicity. The true end, and that which is the greatest, is such an one that all things will promote it; and that end is the glorifying God, and saving our souls. Whatsoever falls out will advance this; and if we secure our end, what need we be troubled? We may always have what we would if we would not have too many things, but only one; for nothing can hinder our doing God honour, and advancing the good of our souls; yea, without those things that we account sad, sometimes we should not attend that end. So David said it was good that he was afflicted, else he had gone astray. Howsoever it fares with us, there is some grace or other to be exercised, and the exercise of every one of them is in order to what we

therefore, and not these, we must always will. He hath bid us likewise that we should not speak evil of others, nor hate them, nor return their injuries ; but nowhere hath he said, Do not suffer affliction, do not put up those wrongs. The former, then, are the things only that we must will not to do. And by this course it is manifest what a great way we shall go to the obtaining peace ; for we shall always be certain of something. When a man's estate is gone, and his friends deceased, or the like, he may say, But I am here still, and I can do what I always could—choose the good, and refuse the evil. I never did will not to be poor, nor to be destitute of relations, nor to suffer reproaches. They are other things that I make the matter of my choice ; and I find that I am

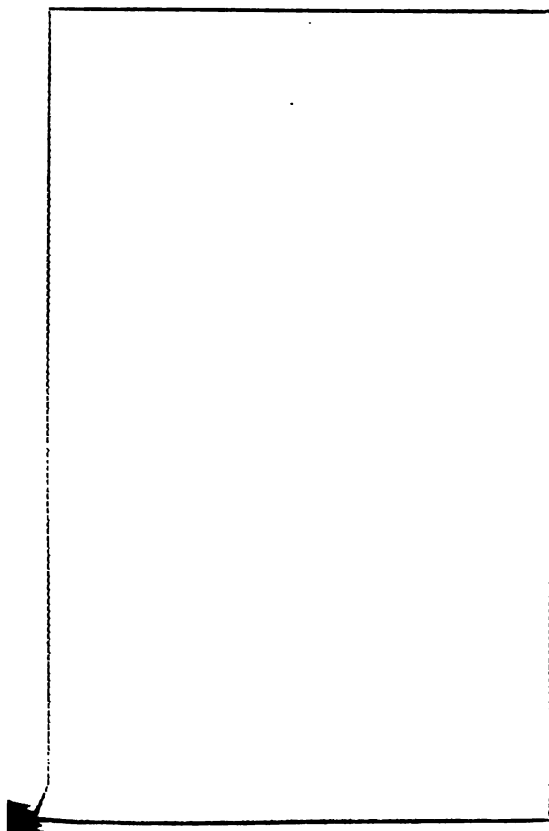
where I was, because I can do those things which are the only things which I choose to do. This will fortify us against what men say of us. Follow Scripture and Reason, and let the world approve of what we do if they please. Nothing more troubles us than an ambitious desire of everyone's good word ; but, "*Haud parum artis opus est, si quis stulto placere velit,*" saith the proverb among the Spaniards : "He shall have enough to do that would please a fool." But how much trouble he shall have that would please, nobody knows how many of them, is not to be imagined. He must not will one thing, but ten thousand—one thing this moment, and another the next, and innumerable contradictions at the same time—to please divers men. Content thyself, therefore, with this : God is

sooner pleased than men ; resolve upon his will, to let that be thine, and keep to it. Choose that which nobody can hinder, no accident can forbid. If thou cannot do God's will, thou canst suffer it. Why then shouldst thou be troubled, when thy own choice remains entire, and thou hast what thou wouldst ?



CHAPTER XII.

A Caution, and the Conclusion, showing that these things suppose the practice of some more general Rules ; and that we must not have these truths to get when we have need of them.



CHAPTER XII.

TO prevent all misunderstanding, I must desire you to consider that all these rules are such as suppose the use of some other that have an universal influence upon all Christian practice, and these must be joined with them, not severed from them. As first, Prayer. Secondly, Giving thanks in every thing. Thirdly, Meditation of heaven and eternal blessedness. Fourthly, Of God's fulness, and the glories of his attributes. Fifthly, Of Christ's death and intercession, with such like ; to all which religious exercises, if we add those rational and

natural considerations, we may be well eased.

The truth is, there are no such cordials as those of the Christian Religion. Nothing can support and comfort us so speedily and substantially as the belief that God was manifest in our flesh, and therefore hath a singular love to us and care of us ; that the Lord Jesus is exalted at the right hand of God, and that we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones ; that he hath great compassion to us, and both power and will to relieve or sustain us ; that we suffer nothing but what he himself did, and are in the way to that glory where he dwells ; and that he will certainly reward our patience, submission, and resignation to him, with *endless joys*. These things we must

always have in our eye, and in our heart. On these foundations we must lay the weight of our souls, which will quiet our desires, and banish our fears, and cut off vain hopes, and restore our very reason to a greater clearness and strength ; so that we shall be the better able to use all other helps for the curing all the diseases we labour under.

What remains then but our hearty endeavour thus to settle and compose ourselves? I told you at the entrance that these rules are not like to physic, that will cure us without our thoughts and considerations ; so now I must further remember you that we must not think to take this course as some men likewise do physic, just when the distemper is upon us, but when we are well and in quiet. When the trouble is once begun, and the disease hath

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seized upon our spirits, it is not so easily cured, and we cannot so well consider nor apply these lessons to our minds ; therefore we must use them as we do food, which we take every day to keep us in health, and not as physic, which we take but at certain times, when we find the humour stirring ; *i.e.* we must work our souls to such kind of reasonings and discourses as these are ; we must bring our minds to such a way of thinking as I have described, and make these rules so familiar to our minds that they may be a part of our understanding, and a piece of our reason, not some foreign things to which we run for relief upon occasion of need. We must strip our souls of their former conceits, and clothe them with these notions. We must root out these

weeds of bitterness : high esteem of ourselves, and of worldly things, earthly love, unreasonable desire, fond hopes and expectations, rashness and inconsideration ; and plant in their stead such good principles as now have been commended to you, and take care that they grow up there. The government of the soul must be altered from the rule of popular opinions, and the tyranny of fancies and imaginations, to the sole command of Christian reason. In this great alteration let us engage all our forces. Think how shameful it is to get all knowledge, and not to know ourselves, nor how to enjoy ourselves, and how miserable he is that encompasses all the world, and searches into all things, only neglects his own peace, or seeks it among the occasions of his trouble. Discharge thyself, there-

fore, with all speed of thy passions, of rashness, and hasty thoughts. Learn thy duty, do it, know God, and thyself, and the world ; and when thou art once humble, prudent, thankful, and heavenly-minded, thou wilt not be displeased at what God or men do ; nothing will trouble thee ; or if any thing do, it will be this, that thou dost these things no better, and art no more perfect in thy art. But this is the happiness of such a man's condition, that those who mourn shall be comforted ; and it is a pleasure to be so troubled ; an ease to the mind to be so aggrieved. No joys here like those of an ingenuous sorrow ; no cup of blessing so sweet as that which is mingled with tears of true contrition for our ingratitude. With a good saying, therefore, of a wise doctor among

the Jews, I will conclude, who seeing a man very sad and sorrowful, thus addressed his speech to him : If thy grief be for the things of this world, I pray God diminish it ; but if it be for the things of the world to come, I pray God increase it.





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